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REMARKS

In response to the communication of December 18, 2006, please consider the following.

A Restriction Requirement was mailed August 11, 2006, and a response to the same was filed on August 30, 2006. The USPTO Public PAIR page indicates that this response was received. In that response, Applicants elected the anchor extension subspecies I of Fig. 7. Applicants also elected the connecting element subspecies I of Fig. 1. The elections were made without traverse.

At the time of the August 30 response, the pending claims were claims 1-20, 50, 52-58, and 91-134. It was stated that at least claims 1, 50, 91, 106, and 125 were generic. Furthermore, claims 1-18, 20, 50, 52, 57-58, 91-104, 106-116, 121-129, and 131-134 were considered to be readable on the elected subspecies. Furthermore, in reviewing the claims, it was noted there was a gap in the claim numbering between claims 116 and 120. Accordingly, claims 117-119 were cancelled to maintain consistency in the claim numbering.

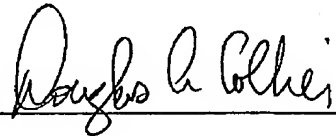
In the amendment submitted on December 4, 2006, new claims 135-137 were added. In the remarks accompanying the amendment, claims 135-137 were identified as being readable on the species elected in the August 30, 2006 response.

In the listing of the claims above, claims 19, 53-56, 105, 120, and 130 are identified as being withdrawn since this appears to be responsive to the request made by the Examiner in the December 18, 2006 communication. It is noted, however, that no communication from the USPTO holding these claims to be withdrawn appears to have been mailed. Accordingly, the identification of the claims as withdrawn is based on the Applicants' identification of the claims readable on the elected species and not based on any communication from the USPTO.

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Claims 1-20, 50, 52-58, 91-116, and 120-137 are now pending. Consideration of the present application in view of the foregoing election and identification of claim status is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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